

Annapolis Conservancy Board

Thursday, January 13, 2011, 5:30pm

Pip Moyer Recreation Center, Room #1

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Jay Baldwin, **Chair**
Jon Chapman

Joel Dunn, **Vice Chair**
Karen Jennings

David Fogle

Members Absent:

Tom Lippert

Gretchen Clift

Staff Present:

Steve Carr

Tami Hook, Recorder

Guest Present:

Rick Leader, Scenic River Land Trust

Alyssa Domzal, SRLT

HOUSEKEEPING:

December 9, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Fogle moved to approve the December 9, 2010 meeting minutes as amended. Mr. Chapman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously in a vote of 5-0.

Review Minutes & Activities of Other City Boards

The meeting minutes for the Annapolis Environmental Commission, Recreation Advisory Board, and Maritime Advisory Board were provided for review.

Future Speakers

It was suggested that Ms. Liz Buxton, Executive Director of the Maryland Environmental Trust, be invited, along with Mayor Cohen, to a formal signing of the new Cooperative Agreement at a future meeting.

National Easement Conservation Database

Staff provided a document from the Conservation Biology Institute (CBI) that has developed a partnership with the Trust for Public Land, Ducks Unlimited, NatureServe, and the Defenders of Wildlife to create a nation-wide inventory of all conservation easements in the U.S. The project can be reviewed at www.conservationeasement.us. The CBI requested access to the Board's GIS maps and list of easements and was referred to the City website.

Draft Bylaws

Staff provided a copy of the draft bylaws for the Board to review. There were some suggested edits of which staff agreed to incorporate into a final document and send out for further review. The Board agreed to revisit this agenda item at the February meeting.

Pending Legislation –O-29-09

Staff reported on O-29-09 (proposed annexation of the Annapolis Roads Golf Course), explaining that the City is still waiting word from the applicant on several issues.

Mail

The mail was provided to the Chairman for review.

2010 Annual Report

The Annual Report was provided to members and comments are needed by Sunday, January 16, 2011 in order to meet the January 17, 2011 submission deadline.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Rick Leader, Executive Director of Scenic River Land Trust Briefing

Staff provided background, explaining that Mayor Cohen established an Environmental Ideas Team to develop ideas for an integrated approach to environmental issues in the City of Annapolis. The Board is in the process of reviewing the feasibility of the EIT recommendations and as part of that review has held briefings with the Planning & Zoning Director, the Recreation & Parks Director, and the GIS Coordinator. He noted that the Board's goal is to provide the City with a map that shows all the significant open space land within the City and potential greenway and recreational links.

Mr. Leader noted that the Scenic River Land Trust (SRLT) has been around for 20 years and was formerly known as the Severn River Land Trust. The name change was to allow the expansion into other areas while maintaining the focus on the Severn and South Rivers. SRLT has 48 easements throughout the County containing approximately 2,000 acres of easement land. He discussed some of the key partnerships that include the US Fish and Wildlife, Maryland Environmental Trust, Anne Arundel County, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. He went over some of the projects that SRLT has been working on, which include establishing a written policy on easement criteria to use as a guiding document, and creating a model easement and a document that amends an easement. All of these projects are intended to help SRLT to obtain an accreditation with the Land Trust Alliance. SRLT has toured 68% of its easements and plans to move to annual visits to complete all of the sites. He provided a copy of the SRLT newsletter for review. He concluded by stating that the next goal is to grow the endowment and the South River Greenway project has assisted in this area.

Ms. Domzal defined the South River Greenway project as the four subwatersheds of the South River headwaters consisting of Bacons Ridge Branch, North River, Tarnant Branch and Broad Creek. The process began with the review of the GIS layers for any property 25 acres or greater and 51 parcels were identified. Of the 51 parcels, 30 of the parcels were found to have ecological value. The 630-acres Bacon Ridge Branch area is at the center of the South River Greenway. This helped to determine what parcels were important to add and worth protecting. She noted that the County was interested in this property for a County park so the former County Recreation and Parks Director authorized the purchase of land around this area. The 630-acres acquired by the County are under protection by the SRLT and MET. She briefly discussed some of the creative funding solutions being sought. She concluded that the County wanted to have an open process for all those individuals and groups interested in using the property, so it established the Bacon Ridge Natural Area Stewardship Committee who will make recommendations to the County.

Mr. Leader explained that the next step is to use grant monies to continue to secure easements. SRLT will be focusing their efforts to secure easement along the Patuxent. SRLT is looking at some of the sites for restorations and is partnering with the County and MET to do stream restoration at the Bacon Ridge site. The goal is to lock up as much land as possible specifically contiguous pieces. It was noted that the City of Annapolis' Waterworks Park is a key parcel within the Broad Creek Watershed.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Update on the New Cooperative Agreement with the MET

Staff noted that the City Office of Law reviewed the agreement and made some changes. The document has been changed to reflect that it is an agreement between the City of Annapolis (not the Annapolis Conservancy Board) and Maryland Environmental Trust.

B. Easement Inspections

Mr. Baldwin provided a copy of the new basic easement report form. Staff requested that the Board review the form and come prepared to discuss at the February meeting. The next step will be that the Chair will prepare a cover letter for review also.

C. Edit Conservation Easement Map and Website – Removed Park Place

Staff noted that the City website and easement map has been edited to remove the Park Place easement. Staff still needs to add the Admiral Oaks easement.

D. Munz Property Update – Easement Location

Staff reported that he met with Tom Smith at Planning and Zoning and after reviewing the Munz Property site plan it was determined there is no conservation easement on the northwest side of Harness Creek View Drive.

E. Open Space Review & Idea Team Recommendations Follow Up

Staff provided the information from Ms. Plumer (Recreation & Parks Director) that the Board requested as a follow-up to previous open space discussions. Ms. Jennings and Mr. Dunn met with Ms. Wampler (GIS Coordinator) to begin the process of putting together the GIS database specifically to determine the environmental layers to include in the mapping process. The next step will be to decide how prioritize the various properties.

F. Regatta Bay II Easement Infractions Letter

Staff will prepare the Regatta Bay Easement infractions letter and have it available at the February 10, 2011 meeting.

G. South Cherry Grove Rain Garden Sign Letter

Staff will contact the Spa Creek Conservancy, asking them to apply for a CBT grant for the South Cherry Grove rain garden sign repair.

H. Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2011 at 5:30pm at Pip Moyer Recreation Center. With no further business, Ms. Jennings moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:50pm. Mr. Chapman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously in a vote 3-0. (Fogle and Baldwin not present for the voting)